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SIPDIS

STATE FOR PA/OBS/BS, GSANTULLI
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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [OIIP](#) [CVIS](#)

SUBJECT: TV CO-OP PROPOSAL

REF: (A) STATE 210798

(B) E-MAIL EXCHANGES SANTULLI/OMOTUNDE

1. Summary: This cable is in response to the Department's FY06 TV Co-op recruitment efforts. PAS Lagos would like to propose a TV co-op on "Youth Development as a Cornerstone to Sustainable National Development." This co-op would be led by one of Nigeria's most respected, independent producers, Ms. Funmi Iyanda. Her production company is affiliated with the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), the largest TV network in Nigeria, Silverbird Television, a Lagos based independent TV station with Africa's largest youth audience and African Independent Television (AIT), a popular Nigerian private TV station with international satellite capability. Using a satellite subscription service, AIT broadcasts to the entire African continent. Funmi Iyanda's company also produces programs for London's BEN TV. Focusing on the 18 to 35 year old demographic, Ms. Iyanda's production company works to foster critical awareness and develop skills for self-improvement and employment. End Summary.

2. The involvement of youth in criminal activities in Nigeria is endemic and has become a major issue in the country's national debate on the democratic dispensation. These armies of unemployed and under-employed youth constitute a growing threat to Nigeria's political stability. Unemployed youth are vulnerable to manipulation by criminal elements such as political godfathers and gangsters. In the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, for example, restive youth have been implicated in destabilizing practice of kidnapping. Indeed, the recent kidnapping of four foreign oil workers - including one American - was directly linked to disaffected young people.

3. A TV co-op on "Youth Development as a Cornerstone to Sustainable National Development" advances our Mission Performance Plan (MPP) goals of: (1) strengthening democratic practices, (2) fostering mutual understanding and (3) preventing, mitigating and resolving conflict. If approved, this Co-op will afford the producer an opportunity to examine what Americans are doing in this vital area. What institutions and practices are Americans pursuing in their quest to groom the next generation of healthy, educated and civic-minded citizens? The target audience would be people between the of ages 18 and 35, particularly those who are still in school. The idea is to create awareness and expose them to critical life skills that will stir them away from drug abuse, prostitution, and political extremists.

4. Funmi Iyanda Productions runs a high profile morning talk show on NTA three times a week. In addition, she hosts weekly shows on Silverbird and AIT, the two independent TV operators noted above. Her talk shows seek to foster and inspire positive change using strong, credible role models and uplifting messages. Generally referred to as "Nigeria's Oprah", the woman behind the Funmi Iyanda's Productions seeks our support to produce a series of documentaries to fulfill the main thrust of the TV co-op and advance the MPP goals of strengthening democratic practices, fostering mutual understanding and preventing, mitigating and resolving conflict.

5. We propose a three-member TV crew for the two week Co-op.

6. PAS Broadcast Media Specialist, Mrs. Oyejoke Omotunde is the Mission point of contact (e-mail: omotundejo@state.gov telephone numbers: office-234-9-263-3713 ext. 155; mobile 234-803-825-5021. Please include PAO Lagos Atim Eneida George (e-mail GeorgeAE@state.gov on subsequent cables and e-mail exchanges). We look forward to your favorable reply.

BROWNE